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#### LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

One of the most exciting perks of being a senior this year has been the ability to witness the creation of the Wellness Center –literally! We only saw an empty lot as freshmen, felt the explosions sophomore year and walked (or drove) past the half-built building innumerable times our junior year. Now the empty lot has finally been transformed into a brand-new state-of-the-art life-altering environmentally friendly Wellness Center.

Wellness is an important term not just for CNR students, but for any person living on this earth. When you are physically well, you are able to increase endurance, feel more attractive and run away from serial killers faster. When you are emotionally well, you don't cry at every sentimental movie, you maintain more friendships and you are less likely to hear the awful phrase, "It's not you, it's me." Psychological wellness allows for a better handling of stressful situations and results in less (or more) use of medication. Spiritual fitness is probably the most subjective: you might think that the Westborough Baptist Church has a direct line to God, but picketing soldiers' funerals, to me, is not cool.

There is a long list of other ways in which people can be well: socially, financially, academically and so on. The last two especially are important for college students, as we always seem to in a perpetual limbo of failing grades (but we always do fine) and low balances on our food cards (which is where social fitness comes in. . . that's what friends are for!).

If you are like me, you are probably getting

vaguely annoyed with the cramming of the word "wellness" into every official document printed by the school. I know it is important. I know that having un-wellness is probably not a good thing. It just seems like everyone, students, faculty and administration alike, are using the Wellness Center as an excuse and an answer to everything. It is the reason the school's tuition is too much, why students and faculty will become more involved on campus, why the

Athletic Program will see increased participation, why enrollment is going to increase and why everyone on campus is supposed to be looking so holistically fit. I think it has become the new Christmas toy that everyone wants, but after the season ends, the excitement goes down. I do not mean this in a bad way. All I am trying to say is that we somehow managed without this center for three years (more for the classes preceding us) and we did just fine. This school is so much more than one building, and I think these reasons and support systems have been eclipsed by the building beside Angela Hall.

In an effort to keep the idea of wellness intact without the verbally caustic sound of its signifier, Femmes is going *en français*. The word *bien-être* literally means "to be well," and provides a pleasant alternative to the traditional term. While I would love to ban the speaking of the word wellness, I know too well (haha) the need for wellness during finals. So don't feel bad about taking an hour or two to watch the never-ending reruns of celebreality on Vh1, to make an actual meal instead of another bacon cheeseburger from the cafe, or to run to the Wellness Center, jogging on the treadmill and listening to your iPod.

Good luck with finals, stay well and see you next January!

Sincerely,

Erin Daley

#### ABOUT THE COVER

This is a watercolor monotype I did of a cherry blossom plant/tree. I wanted to make something that not only looked and felt tranquil but was for me in the process of making it tranquil. It can sometimes be hard to find peace when living a hectic life, and sometimes making art provides the tranquility and peace of mind that I need during stressful times. - Karyn Mooney



# HONORS MATTERS: THE REVOLUTION OF 2008

Dr. Amy Bass, Associate Professor of History, Honors Program Director

At last, it is over. No more campaigning. No more debates. No more decisions, at least for a moment. Campaign 2008, and all that went with it, is complete. Senator Barack Hussein Obama is no more. President-elect Barack Hussein Obama has now arrived.

I consumed this election like Halloween candy, tearing open *The New York Times* each morning to see what had landed on the op-ed page, putting several evening newscasts into my DVR lineup, and making time to read everything from The Onion to The Huffington Post online. It became (almost) a full time occupation, this election. And then, when it arrived, as I stood in line at the polls not long after the sun had come up, something new dawned upon me: it was possible that the United States was going to elect a black man to the Oval Office.

How had I let this slide? Me, a historian of African American culture, of modern America, of civil rights? If I had forgotten this, had everyone? Yes, a colleague assured me, she, too, had forgotten about the historical moment that was upon us. There was something about what was at stake, about the moment that we were in, that had obliterated history from her consciousness. Mine, too. But then it happened. And as I sat up that night, waiting to hear him speak, waiting to see a First Family that was going to be new in so many ways, it all came crashing down on my head. But rather than think about it in terms of Martin Luther King, or the March on Washington (although the scenes from Grant Park in Chicago certainly rivaled those from August of 1963), or Elaine Brown, or Anne Moody, I thought about Thomas Jefferson.

You can't get much whiter than Thomas Jefferson.

But it was his election in 1800 that had stunned the world in a way that Campaign 2008 rang familiar. What is now dubbed "The Revolution of 1800" – coined, actually, by Jefferson himself – was a turning point because it was the first time that power passed hands to a different party in the United States. Bloodlessly. Without a coup d'etat,

without the military, without hanging chads, without recounts.

Jefferson's election demonstrated that America, despite no mention of it in the Constitution, would operate primarily on the basis of a two-party system. While George Washington held such a grip of popularity that his election had been unanimous in both 1789 and 1792, during the term of his successor, John Adams, political factions began to grow between his Federalist supporters and then Vice President Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans. Factions were one of the driving reasons behind James Madison's eloquent writings in the Federalist papers. With Adams' presidency, Madison's warnings came to fruition.

What kind of factions are we talking about? Well, at one point during Adams' presidency, a fight erupted in the House of Representatives between Roger Griswold, a Federalist from Connecticut, and Matthew Lyon of Vermont. And not just any fight: Griswold went at it with his cane, while Lyon responded with fire tongs.

It was with the election of Jefferson that presidential ideas of conciliation between two seemingly opposed approaches to government began to take hold. Indeed, his statement, "We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists," rings similar to much of the rhetoric that President-elect Obama has employed as he begins his transition to the White House.

The election of Obama is, without question, historic on many planes. But perhaps one that should not be overlooked in respect to the other factors is that it demonstrated, loudly, boldly, and definitively, how America can work. How voting, regardless of the role of the Electoral College, can work. And how platitudinal words like "change" and "hope" can actually have very real ramifications. It isn't often that a chant of "Yes We Can" can be transformed into a confirmation of "Yes We Did."

But we did.

#### SARAH'S SUPER FITNESS GUIDE

Sarah Hnath, '09

Sarah Hnath, a certified personal trainer, gives tips on how to stay fit on a student budget.

Recent research in the Journal of American College Health revealed that 70% of college students gain weight within just the first 2 years of college! Several contributing factors that were noted in college student behavior and weight were high fat diets, late night munching, and not enough exercise. So how and why do students let themselves go upon entering the college world? Typical responses to this question are "I don't have enough time" and "I'm too broke for that organic stuff," among numerous other excuses. Although these are fairly legitimate excuses, they are not good enough to let your health and well-being slip. So, to help with the task of maintaining good health and still get the A's you work so hard to achieve, I've put together a list of easy, fun, and affordable ways to stay healthy without letting your grades suffer.

"Kill Two Birds with One Stone"
Reading so much your head feels like it is going to explode is pretty common amongst college students. Instead of sitting around reading and collecting dust, head to the Wellness Center with your book, hop on a bike and read at the same time!

"Time Management" Instead of pulling 'all-nighters' and skipping the gym, get out a planner and pencil it all in! If you schedule out all your assignments once you receive your syllabi, you will be less likely to let your schoolwork pile up. By the same token, if you have a specific workout time scheduled, you will be more likely to actually do it. (And you might actually get some sleep while you're at it!)

"Write It Down" Record what you eat, portion sizes, and the time of day you eat it. This will keep your eating habits in check. Set short term and long term goals, write them down, and keep track of your progress.

"Grab a Friend" Working out with a friend will keep both of you accountable and make being healthy something fun.

Don't be a statistic! Live healthy, live happy.

(Any feedback or questions are welcome. Contact: Sarah at <a href="mailto:shnath@cnr.edu">shnath@cnr.edu</a> if you would like to hear more!)

# FOSSILS, FOOTPRINTS AND DNA

Sarah Hnath '09 and Carol Mathew '09

Sarah and Carol reflect on their "Genetics and Identity" class through a field trip to the American museum of Natural History, taking a look at life as we know it.

The Science of Genetics and Identity; these topics clash in Dr. Petrullo's Lynn "Genetics and Identity" class. From Sci-fi, to legislation, to forensics to origins, this class dives headfirst into questions of mystery, morals and nature vs. nurture debates. On Octoheaded to American Museum



ber 31<sup>st</sup> 2008, we headed to the Left to Right: Carol Mathew '09, Siddiqua Hosein '09, Dr. Lynn Petrullo, Sarah Hnath '09, Darianna Parra '11, Kristin Diaz '11, Alexandria Bignall '09, and Eileen Schaub '11

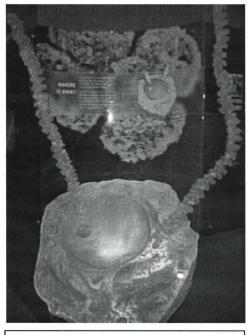
In the exhibit, we saw a whole assortment of theories, models, dioramas and chaeological findings all seeking one ultimate goal: to figure out how apes became Homo sapiensmodern men. You don't believe that humans came from apes? The exhibit also offers insights into evolution vs.

of Natural History to explore "The Anne

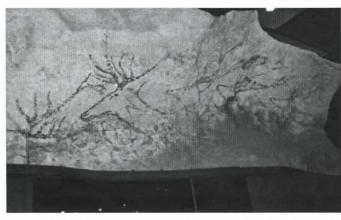


Left to Right: Darianna Parra '11, Kristin Diaz '11 and Dr. Lynn Petrullo read information about the evolution of man.

and Bernard Spitzer Hall of Human Origins", with the quest to shed some light on how science addresses the question of how we, the human race, came to be.



Model of a cell with DNA



Pre-historic cave man drawing

intelligent design debates.

Clearly, our undivided attention went to the diorama of the early hominids situated at the center of the exhibit. For a person that short in stature, a hominid definitely possessed the longest feet we had ever seen. Along with the romantic quality offered by the couple and the surprisingly long feet, they literally had us begging for

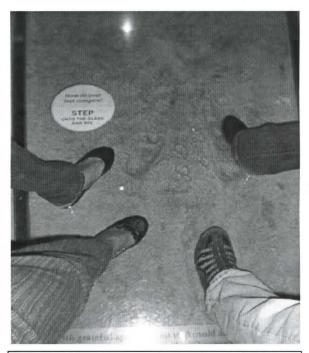


Dioramas of an early hominid couple taking a romantic stroll in African wildreness

more (See below...we are following their footprints!)

As enlightening as the trip was, to our dismay the study of genetics was not represented as much as it should have been in this exhibit. As we've learned, genetics is the reason our human race has experienced change and variation over time.

Despite this minor glitch, this exhibit is amazing in the array of information, artifacts (such as the cave painting to the left) and amazing replications of the history of mankind according to science. So, to anyone who is interested in the history of hu-



Left to Right: Siddiqua Hosein, Sarah Hnath '09, Eileen Schaub '11 and Carol Mathew '09 follow the unnaturally long hominid footprints

mans, our evolution and migration, The Anne and Bernard Spitzer Hall of Human Origins offers an exciting trip (Anne and Bernard Spitzer are former governor Spitzer's parents!!)

# REFLECTIONS FROM HONORS 304

Honors 304, also known as "Genetics and Identity," explores the implications of scientific advancement in the area of human genes. These new discoveries pose difficult questions and problems about identity not only to scientists, but to every human being on the planet. The following are various reflections about the seminar.

From meeting Twisty, a DNA molecular character on the Stephen Colbert Report to learning how to collect and analyze DNA from a glass slipper, "Genetics and Identity" has been a great ride with this class. I have enjoyed it immensely. -Dr. Lynn Petrullo

Being in "Genetics and Identity" has taught me so much. The readings, discussions and lab have helped me to better understand our bodies on a genetic level as well as how much they influence the people we become. - Darianna Parra, '11

My experience in HON 304: Genetics and Identity has been very rewarding. It is very refreshing to learn how much information there is to know about genetics; of course, there is so much more to learn, but now I can honestly say that I know more now about the passing on of genetic traits, genetic screening, genetic testing, etc. than I ever did before. In addition, I know more about how much of an impact the *culture* of genetics has on our contemporary society. Genetics as a science is a culture and as such it has transcended the boundaries of politics, reproduction, sex and society. The culture of genetics is everywhere and is a part of our future, and such realization has come about by the many readings, discussions and presentations that we have had in class. I am proud to have been able to be a part of such a dynamic, intelligent group of women whose personal experiences and knowledge further enhanced my appreciation of the class. -Alexandria Bignall,'09

"Genetics and Identity" is not just "a good class." As a biology student, it is enlightening as well as enjoyable to take a subject I've studied for several years and look at it from an entirely different perspective. I think the course raises many issues about science, society and self that would benefit all students to learn more about. Whether one is a "science dork" or not, these are the issues that the human race has dealt with throughout history, and are even more evident today.

-Sarah Hnath,'09

Looking around us at the media, literature and even our daily conversations, it becomes clear how much we identify ourselves as our genes. However, is it just all about our genes? "Genetics and Identity" deals with these issues that everyone should be concerned about. In a world where our DNA is dictating our identities more and more, this class has made me aware of how identities change constantly and what influence science can play in it. It seems as though we are in a hurry to explain everything in terms of our genes. But as Dr. Petrullo reminds us, science can disprove anything 100% but cannot prove it 100%. So yes, DNA might be the blueprint of life but it certainly is not the only print! -Carol Mathew, '09

#### LEARNING TO BE AN ART EDUCATOR

Karyn Mooney, '09

On Saturday, October 25th some of my fellow art education majors and I went into the city to attend the New York City Art Teacher's Association/United Federation of Teachers (NYCATA/UFT) 28th Annual Artworks Conference. We were lucky enough to attend for free (art teachers paid about \$40) and were able to spend an entire day, from 8 AM until 4:30 PM, attending workshops. We learned about new and creative lesson plans that we could use (yet never would have come up with on our own!), such as how to work with autistic children in the art classroom. As well as gaining some very valuable knowledge about what more we can do in the art classroom creatively, we were able to get

some free "swag" from the many vendors that were there: art supplies from Utrecht Art Stores, aprons and sample lesson plans/ projects from Blick Art Stores, and information on different art organizations and programs like Arts Horizon and Ecofest. What made the conference an even greater experience was this year's Artist of the Year and Keynote Speaker: Yoko Ono! Ono discussed her more recent work, mainly her project "Onochord" and the "Peace Tower" in Iceland, which promotes the sharing of love and peace in a time when the two are much needed. In addition, it honors the memory of John Lennon. She also praised the art educators for teaching children about art and the many messages

that can be expressed and sent through the medium. I attended the conference last year, but this year's was much better because they had many more interesting and exciting workshops and project ideas that I will be sure to use in my art classroom when I am a teacher. I also took away the experience of sending "I Love You" messages with a flashlight to Yoko Ono. For more information on Ono's projects, visit www.imaginepeace.com.



Yoko Ono accepting the Artist of the Year award at the 2008 NYCATA/UFT art education conference.

# CATASTROPHE!: THE COLLOQUIUM

Dr. Roblyn Rawlins, Associate Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies Program Director

"CATASTROPHE: THE COLLOQUIUM." Doesn't that sound like the title of a disaster movie? In the familiar trope of Hollywood disasters, we expect the members of the mysterious colloquium to eventually band together, overcoming their initial differences and disagreements about the nature of the catastrophe and how to proceed and through unity triumphing over disaster to rebuild community. "Catastrophe" is not just a good title for a disaster movie, it is also the rich topic of this year's Honors Colloquium, a year-long required interdisciplinary experience for Honors students at CNR, which begins in the fall semester with intensive readings and discussions and ends in the spring when students present the findings of their in-depth study and analysis of the fall semester's topic at Honors Conference Day. Led by a historian, Dr. Daniel Garcia, and a sociologist (myself), this year's Honors Colloquium members are focusing on the socially constructed concept of "catastrophe," using two catastrophic events -- the terrorist attacks of 9/11/01 and the floods related to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans -- as case studies.

The 21st century is not yet ten years long, but we have already seen two of the most consequential catastrophes in American history: the events of Sept. 11, 2001, and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the Gulf Coast in 2005. The future will undoubtedly bring an increasing number and severity of catastrophic events, given the state of the natural and the social worlds in the 21st century. In the face of catastrophic events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, how can we better understand what is happening around us?

Perhaps we might use one of the tools of sociological analysis to examine the social phenomenon of catastrophe. Max Weber, one of the most important classical theorists in sociology, developed the conceptual and methodological tool of "ideal types," which, I think, can be a very useful way of thinking about social phenomena. Weber used the methodology of ideal types to examine such social things such as charisma and bureaucracy. To construct an ideal type, one posits the essential components of a social phenomena or event as derived from theory. Then actual types of social things are compared to

the ideal types, enabling us to see clearly what components or variables are at work in a particular case.

Since the 1970s, American sociologists and social psychologists have developed a substantial body of research and theory on catastrophe and disaster. This work has generated a model of four ideal types of catastrophic events. Before reading on, what types of disasters or catastrophic events would you propose? Most people think first of natural disasters, and so let's start with those.

### NATURAL DISASTERS, CONSENSUS, AND THERAPEUTIC PROCESSES

Natural disasters include hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, etc. They primarily destroy the built environment. Communities that have been stricken by a natural disaster typically focus on prevention and recovery efforts, developing construction and engineering codes, warning technologies, and emergency response plans to safeguard the community's wellbeing in case of future disasters.

Research indicates that communities affected by natural disasters are marked by a therapeutic process of recovery. A political and social consensus typically develops such that all community members agree that a disaster has, in fact, occurred, that it has been caused by natural events, and that great harm has been caused by these natural events. The survivors of natural disasters are seen as legitimate victims, not to blame for their own predicaments. Therefore, there is consensus that rescue, restoration, and recovery efforts should be supported by the government and non-governmental organizations. Recovery may be slow and painful, but it is marked by a therapeutic process of healing and restoration of community ties along with the rebuilding of the built environment.

### TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTERS, CONTENTION, AND CORROSIVE PROCESSES

Technological disasters are caused by the breakdown of technological processes and systems in conjunction with the presence of vulnerable human populations. In some cases of technological disasters, such as the failure of a nuclear power plant that leaks radioactive materials, the built environment may be preserved while the biophysical environment becomes uninhabitable. Technological disasters are human-caused toxic events. Because technologies are human-built, complex systems, sociologists of technology argue that technological failures, and by extension technological disasters, are inevitable.

Unlike the therapeutic process typically following natural disasters, communities stricken by technological disasters tend to be marked by corrosive processes and to remain "corrosive communities" in the long run. The political and social consensus about the nature of natural disasters, the legitimacy granted to those who suffer from them, and the ease of blaming "an act of God" or fate or nature is not possible for communities following technological disasters.

Instead, technological disasters are contested disasters.

After a technological disaster occurs, a contentious discourse typically develops within the affected communities, marked by ambiguity and contradictory understandings of the extent of harm and who should be held responsible for the disaster. This contestation delays the possibilities of community restoration and recovery: more often than not, a legal discourse subsequently emerges in which victims attempt to get relief from the corporate or governmental entities that are believed to have caused or failed to prevent the disaster. The resulting corrosive community is marked by chronic social disruption, with victims suffering anger, physical and mental health problems, loss of resources, and often litigation stress. Research has demonstrated that survivors of technological disasters are more likely than those of natural disasters to experience severe and long-term social, physical and mental health problems. Community members often blame government, corporate, and other institutions, and as these entities also seek to lay the blame for technological failure elsewhere, a general loss of trust cripples the recovery process of corrosive communities.

### NATURAL-TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTERS: THE FUTURE FACE OF CATASTROPHE

A third type of disaster combines features of natural and technological disasters and occurs when a natural disaster such as a storm or earthquake directly or indirectly releases hazardous material into the environment. These are referred to as "na-tech" disasters if you enjoy geeky neologisms or natural-technological disasters if you don't. The catastrophic flooding in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina can be most correctly placed in this category. It was the failure of technology, i.e., the breaching of the levees, not the storm itself, that caused the flooding. Katrina was also associated with great haz-mat damage. In addition to the "toxic soup" some have called the floodwaters in New Orleans, the storm in the Gulf Coast caused the second largest oil spill in United States history.

Natural-technological disasters are the future face of catastrophe. We are likely to see increasing numbers and severity of this type of catastrophic event because: 1) the incidence of natural disasters will increase because of human harm to the natural environment, notably global climate change and our propensity for destroying wetlands which absorb excess rainwater, building on the side of scenic mountains, paving everything, causing erosion, etc; 2) population density is increasing rapidly in disaster-prone areas such as coastal areas and earthquake- and mudslide-prone areas; and 3) technology and industry continue to expand over the globe. As natural disasters become transmuted into natech disasters, the possibilities for therapeutic processes of recovery diminish and contested discourses of disaster and corrosive processes of nonrecovery become more likely.

#### TERRORIST DISASTERS

The last type of disaster results from purposeful acts of death and destruction that are driven by political aims: we call these terrible disasters by the name of "terrorism." Unlike the loss of control of technology that characterizes technological or natural-technological disasters, in terrorist disasters control of technology is used to destroy human life and/or property. Unfortunately for the safety and security of us all, our society has only a weak preventive and response system in place for terrorist, technological, and na-tech disasters, while our technological, political and social systems are virtual incubators for increased risk of these disasters.

Community recovery from terroristic disasters partakes of some aspects of natural disasters: for example, there was community consensus that the victims of 9/ll were legitimate and that the federal government was responsible for recovery and pre-

vention of further attacks. The federal government was quick - many now say too quick -- to take action in rescue, recovery, and the development of warning technologies (remember the terror alert levels the newly-formed Department of Homeland Security used to publish, lurking at the bottom of your TV screen in the early days of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars?) Yet if community recovery from 9/11 is our model, terroristic disasters also trouble the "consensus vs. contention" model of community recovery. Bitter disagreements over the "War on Terror" and other governmental actions following 9/11 and over the future of the ground zero site and the plight of survivors have continued to divide Americans. New Yorkers who survived the collapse of the Twin Towers continue to experience long term physical and mental health problems, often apparently linked to haz-mat exposure and the subject of ongoing litigation and disagreements.

#### THE RISK SOCIETY

Another line of sociological theory and research focuses not only on rare catastrophic events, but also on the ever-present sense of risk of such events that permeates contemporary life in a globalized world. The influential social theorist Anthony Giddens distinguishes between two types of risk: external risk and manufactured risk. External risk is risk experienced as coming from outside the individual, from nature (as in natural disasters) or tradition (as in war). Manufactured risk is risk created by the actions of human knowledge/power in the world: for example, technologies create manufactured risk.

Sociologist Ulrich Beck argues that the increase in manufactured risk that we see in the contemporary is created by science and that science has failed to manage risk properly. According to Beck, "Science has become the protector of a global contamination of people and nature. In that respect, it is no exaggeration to say that in the way they deal with risk in many areas, the sciences have squandered until further notice their historic reputation for rationality" (as quoted in Pip Jones, p. 177). Furthermore, according to Beck our relationship with science and scientists has fundamentally changed from a modern consensus in which science and the accumulation of objective knowledge through reason that science makes possible were generally viewed as holding the key to unlocking human potential and achieving social progress (i.e., the Enlightenment project). Scientists were viewed as the experts we

could depend upon to guide us in troubled or uncertain times. While there were of course individual failures, disasters, and scandals, these could be explained away as the fault of individual scientists or experts, not the fault of the scientific enterprise as a whole. But Beck argues that in late modernity, beginning in the 1970s, we have lost this faith in science.

Part of what has happened is the increasing visibility of arguments among scientists themselves. For example, environmentalist social movement activists employ their own scientists to refute what corporate scientists argue about the environmental consequences of corporate activity. This can be seen in the tobacco industry, in regards to global warming, in regards to drug therapies, among diet doctors, etc. When the experts do not agree, this places the management of risk upon the individual. In everyday life, uncertainties multiply and our sense of risk begins to increase. In a risk society, Beck argues, we must manage uncertainty in all areas of our everyday lives.

#### THE END

Well, I am here in a state of uncertainty about finishing this essay. And I am sure that the members of the Colloquium are also in a state of uncertainty about finishing this semester and, next semester, their projects. But what if this were really a block-buster disaster movie – CATASTROPHE: THE COLLOQUIUM.

Imagine the scene. After struggling through our contentious moments and achieving solidarity through consensus, the members of the Colloquium – Dr. Rawlins, Dr. Garcia, Mattie, Diane, Natasha, Jackie, Jelena – climb gamely out of the wreckage of Chidwick 209, our hair in fetching disarray, our clothes carrying traces of chalk dust, while bits of the Susan Faludi and Naomi Klein texts drift down like clean snow speckled with shiny bits from the DVD of Spike Lee's documentary, ready to carry on with the hard work of rebuilding our community, proposals for next semester's projects in hand.

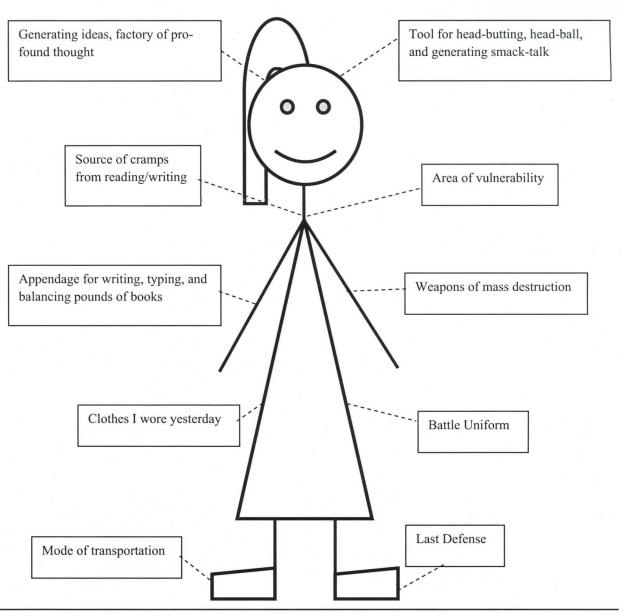
Coming next spring, CATASTROPHE: THE COLLOQUIUM II opens on Honors Conference Day, when the colloquium members will present their projects for your edification and delight. Don't miss it.

Dr. Bass, will there be popcorn?

# THE STUDENT-ATHLETE: AN EXAMINATION

Megan Showell, '09

The timeless conflict of brains v. brawn has yet to be resolved. It is in the Student-Athlete that this war is held within a single body. The subject experiences the conflicting duality with what appears to be great ease. Upon closer inspection, however, the specimen is physically torn between the world of academia and the realm of athleticism. How can it be possible to balance the mind and the body without contradiction? The anomaly that is the Student-Athlete remains without resolve to the turmoil of duality in a single being.



Femmes D'Esprit ~ Fall 2008, Issue 2

# AN HONORS HALLOWEEN

Photos by Kristin Diaz, '11 and Erin Daley, '09

On October 28, 2008, the Honors Program held its annual Holiday celebration. The party also introduced the freshman cohort to the rest of the honors ensemble. Games, prizes and, of course, food abounded as some members showed off their Halloween costumes!





Femmes D'Esprit ~ Fall 2008, Issue 2

#### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Mary Henderson, '11

While Halloween is celebrated by most people as a commercial "fun" holiday to dress up and play tricks, for some people it is special religious celebration. This brings to light some questions about Halloween: who founded Halloween? Why? Who would ever want a trick over a treat? Mary Henderson provides possible solutions to these puzzling queries.

After attending the awesome Honor's Halloween Party (you know you are at an Honors party when you have to take a quiz while in attendance!), I realized how little some people know about the origins of Halloween. It makes sense, since not everyone is *quite* as versed in pre-Christian religions of Ireland as I might be; nonetheless, they are interesting facts to know. In fact, when you realize where Halloween gets its origin, it makes sense that some children in our neighborhoods growing up weren't allowed to participate. To the majority of the population, however, Halloween is just another commercial holiday.

Then you have us: the crazy people who still celebrate the holiday as close as possible to the original meaning it might have had. We, of course, cannot rewind the pages in the tome of history to reveal what the truth of the matter was, but we can make some pretty good assumptions. As the Honors party attendees learned, we can trace the origins of our modern Halloween to the Celtic civilization. The Celts celebrated the holiday Samhain (pronounced S -OW-an), making jack-o-lanterns out of turnips and dressing up in costume to confuse the malevolent spirits who walked the earth on this day - the day the veil between the world of the living and the world of the ancestors is the thinnest. Treats were left out for the ancestors, and time was set aside to honor anyone who had died since this time the previous year. At least that's how the story goes.

This day might have marked the New Year for the Celts and is not believed to have been celebrated very differently from the way El Dia De Los Muertos still is. To those of us who try to find ways to incorporate these traditions into our daily lives, this holiday does mark our new year. To us, time is like a wheel with cycles repeating over and over with the repetition of seasons, but this day marks a fresh start. At this point in the year, everything was harvested (the earth was "dead"), and it was time to play a waiting game for the sun to return at Yule (Christmas) and bring the earth back to life with longer days of more warm sunshine. Death marks the end of any age, and so it makes sense to also be the end of the year. Yule and new life brought by sun marks the rebirth at the beginning of time.

These ideas can be pretty complicated to people not used to thinking of time as anything other than linear, so I'll take some time to break it down. If you are a Christian, or are at all familiar with Christian texts, a good way of explaining our view of time is actually through a passage in the bible. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (or the Pete Seeger song "Turn! Turn! Turn! [To Everything There is a Season]"), explains that "To everything there is a season, a time for every

purpose under the sun. A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to reap, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance..." You get the idea. As neo-pagans, our view of time is exactly this. The spring season is a time for birth and rebirth (with dancing and planting and laughter) while the earth renews itself after the cold death of winter. But everything has its season, and eventually the time for death and rest (and reaping and mourning) must come with Samhain in the fall. The time for birth comes back with the turning of the wheel once more.

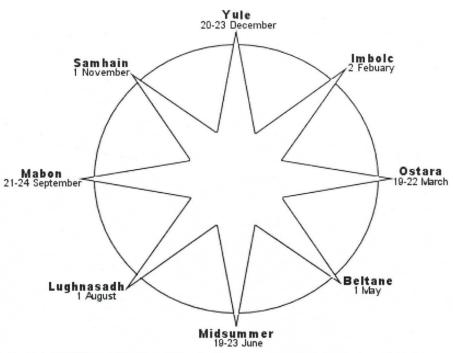
This is my favorite high day. Out of all eight celebrations that we have in the wheel of the year, Samhain is my favorite. When the earth is dying as it approaches the coming winter, we celebrate. For a successful year and everything we have accomplished, we honor those who could not experience it with us in body but who are

certainly around in spirit. Without their help we certainly could never have made it to where we have gotten.

So as I sat down to dinner on Halloween night, I said a prayer for all those who could not be here on earth with me 21-24 September but who nonetheless have helped to bring me where I am today. I save some of my food as an offering for them, and in the morning I'll bury a small portion of it for the spirit of the earth as it symbolically dies with

the coming winter. Without the earth none of us could be where we are today, either. I sing songs of thanks and praise and spend some time meditating on the interconnectedness and impermanence of all things. 'Tis the season.

So Halloween, or Samhain, is the celebration of one complete turn of the wheel of seasons. We live, we die, and we get reborn. It is the time to honor one's ancestors and anyone who might have passed in the last year, or even further back depending on how their death is still affecting us. It is time to eat well and celebrate before the earth gets *really* cold. It is time to dress up and wear masks to "trick" the bad spirits into leaving us alone and offer candies to others to "treat" the good spirits who want to do well by us. In the spring, it will be the season for other things. Turn... Turn... Turn...



# AH, GRADUATION. FINALLY.

Jee Hee Yoon, '09

Graduation: 1) Conferral or receipt of an academic degree or diploma marking completion of studies; 2) A ceremony at which degrees or diplomas are conferred; a commencement.

Commencement: 1) A beginning, a start

One Sunday afternoon six months ago, I was sitting in front of my computer and writing some twenty-five page paper, my junior colloquium project. Sitting next to me was a thick binder that accumulated all of my research throughout the semester and some Chinese food. When I picked my topic, I really had no idea why I chose to research and write about microfinance. While I was writing it, I kept asking myself, "Why...Why did I pick this topic?" This essentially led to "I can't wait till graduation, so I can just stop writing!" By May, I was so aggravated with writing papers; by then I had written about sixty pages worth. I was deadly exhausted. Until I got my internship, I did not understand the value of writing that twenty-five page paper.

I came to the United States about 7½ years ago as an exchange student to Livingston, Louisi-



ana. As an exchange student, I had an opportunity to experience American public schools and family values by living with an American family. Next, I moved to Lee, Maine as an international student to attend boarding school. During my two year stay, I had a chance to familiarize myself with residence hall life and

make friends from various international locations. After that, I finally applied to universities and colleges across the United States. I chose CNR because I knew that the college would open up more opportunities and possibilities for the future.

For the last 3½ years at CNR, with 2½ as a part of the Honors Program, I had endless opportunities where I was able to obtain leadership skills as well as research, writing, and analytical skills, extend my knowledge in international affairs and development on a national and global scale, volunteer in local and international locations, and make life-long friends. CNR gave me a





Jee Hee and Dr. Bass at the 2008 Honors Convocation.

chance as a woman to receive an education and knowledge that I could contribute as a global citizen to the world. CNR really opened doors to the future for me. As a part of the Honors Program, I definitely had a chance to share great knowledge with many women who were smart, resourceful, and inspirational. I had my own hardships while at CNR, but it taught me more than just to accept the suffering; writing a twenty-five page paper might be hard, but at the end of hours and hours of writing and researching, someone will eventually appreciate your work, and you will appreciate the opportunity that was given. As a professor once told

me, "Real life is all about writing, research, and paperwork." It is definitely true!

To me, graduation is not just about receiving an honors diploma or embracing the moment of celebration. Graduation is about finding other

opportunities and possibilities for the start of a new beginning. So when I am approached with a question like "What do you plan to do after graduation?" I usually throw in couple of generic answers such as "I am planning to go to graduate school in South Korea," or "I am planning to find a job suitable to my studies." Honestly, I am not sure what is ahead of me. My future is filled with openended possibilities. I am sure the world, like CNR, will have an opportunity somewhere that will open up larger possibilities for another beginning.

So, for my last contribution to Femmes before my December graduation, I have a few words of advice for you all: do not be afraid to take chances for something that you have not done before. Always look for possibilities and opportunities – be open-minded. HAVE FUN! We should not take opportunities that we have for granted. As women, there are still many ladders to climb in the world. Just being at CNR has opened endless possibilities for you to be a part of the bigger picture in the world. I am happy to say that my choice to be a part of CNR and The Honors Program has definitely allowed me to see things with a more open-minded perspective and with confi-

dence that I have a better standing in the world as a woman who received a women's college education.

Farewell, everyone, and enjoy your Christmas break! (Get some sleep, eat good food, and read some novels!)



The cast of *Alcestis*, the play performed by last spring's "Greek Tragedy" class. From left to right: Alexandria Bignall '09, Jee Hee Yoon '09, Erin Daley '09, Darianna Parra '11, Sarah Hnath '09, Ashley Melendez '11, and Mary Henderson '11.

# THE BEST FIELD TRIP EVER

Erin Daley '09 and Megan Showell '09

On October 14, 2008, three CNR students, including Honors seniors Megan Showell and Erin Daley, braved their professors' disapproval and the longest line in the world to attend a live taping of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart in New York City.

Trying to get tickets to the Jon Stewart Show was one of the most difficult trials we have faced as human beings. The show is booked for a full year in advance, so unless you can see that far into the future you need to consider other options.

We could have waited in the stand-by line, but there is no chance we could get in. We could hook up with people on chat sites or buy them from a third party, but we are poor college students who are a little afraid of stalkers. The only option left was to continuously hit the refresh button and pray that someone cancelled. Two days later, we were in luck. It didn't matter the day, we pushed it and celebrated.

Reality Check #1: The Daily Show only tapes on weekdays. We were going to miss a class. Reality Check #2: We had to be there at least two hours in advance. We were going to miss two classes. Reality Check #3: Taping finished at 5 PM. We were going to miss our Honors Senior Symposium with Dr. Bass.

These were sacrifices that needed to be made. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity, so we immediately set out to do some damage control. After all, the guest was going to be Ari

Fleischer, former press secretary for our very own W. during the attacks of 9/11 and the beginning of the Iraq War.

The result? Well, we only spent about a half hour to forty-five minutes in the presence of Jon Stewart, which meant that the other four trillion hours we were on our feet: walking to and from the studio on the West Side, wai-

ting two hours in line and then another hour in this tiny waiting room that looked like something out of a Saw movie. Not promising. And the music they played in the studio? Deaf-



ening. I think it was to demonstrate how loud we were supposed to be, but all I got from it was tinnitus.

Our seats were directly in front of his desk, which was magnificent at first, but then the cameras blocked our view. It was amazing, nevertheless, and I swear things seemed ten times funnier in person. They have a comedian come out first to warm you up and get you laughing, and then there is a quick Q&A with the man

(boxers or briefs?). The interview with Ari was. . . interesting. He called Jon a biased liberal, and we booed—much to the duress of all the staff, who were frantically waving at us to stop.

After, we rushed back to watch it on TV, straining to hear ourselves. It was definitely worth it—just don't tell Dr. Bass.

